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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/NCE MARC NORDBERG

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2018
TAGS: [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [GR](#) [MK](#) [HU](#) [MARR](#)
SUBJECT: HUNGARY ON MACEDONIA'S NATO ASPIRATIONS AND NAME
DISPUTE WITH GREECE

REF: SECSTATE 14821

Classified By: POL/ECON Counselor Eric Gaudiosi, reasons 1.4 (b and d)

¶1. (C) Marianne Berez, SE Europe, Western Balkans and CIS Department Head and Gabor Horvath, Deputy Security and Non-Proliferation Department Head, discussed reftel with PolOff on January 15. Ambassador Berez underlined Hungary's support for the Nimetz process, commenting that Greece's approach on the name issue, in particular, is very inflexible and unhelpful. While noting that Macedonia's actions contribute to the current stalemate, the Hungarian message to the Greeks stresses the importance of regional stability, commenting that "Hungary did not use bi-lateral issues with Romania in voting to support Romania's NATO membership" and the Greeks should not let the name dispute issue carry the day in their decision, either. Continuing, Berez noted that Greece has already "bought" Macedonia through significant business investment, and a "no" vote on Macedonian NATO membership would not be in Greece's best economic interest.

¶2. (C) Horvath commented that, while performance-based criteria were important for aspiring NATO members, broader, regional stability considerations are very important for Hungarians as well. He expressed appreciation for U.S. support for the most ambitious enlargement round possible at the Bucharest summit, stating Hungary believes all three candidate countries should receive invitations. Continuing, Horvath noted that Hungary supports the efforts of Special Envoy Nimetz, and they are not "in the midst" of any negotiations on the name issue between Macedonia and Greece. That said, Horvath noted that they have discussed the issue with Macedonia to try and convince them to find a compromise so that "they do not exclude themselves" from receiving an invitation. He also stated that the MFA has discussed the issue with Greece, encouraging them to "be more liberal" with Macedonia on the issue. Horvath said that the Macedonian Foreign Minister and Prime Minister are scheduled to visit Hungary before the March 6 informal Ministerials and the name dispute issue would be an agenda item.
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